



A DISCOURSE

Concerning The

UNION

THIS matter of the **UNION** being of the greatest concern to Scotland, I did apply my self with all the ear-
nestness I could, to consider it, and I do offer my opinion
to the publick in the following manner.

I. To Consider the present State of the Nation, and if an Uni-
on, be not a fit Remedy for our present Condition.

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- 2^{dly} What sort of an Union seems best.
- 3^{dly} The Objections against, and the Answers for an Incorporating union.

As to the present State, 'tis agreed to by Every body that we are in a decaying Condition, and I think not only so, but that we are the most neglected if not oppress'd State in Europe, never notic'd but upon Occasion, of some Design, of advancing our Trade or Interest, as soon crush'd by the *English* as thought on by us: The date of this Misery is as universally acknowledged to be since King *James* his accession to the Crown of *England*, our Sovereigns ever since being Engaged in the Interests of a Nation, that are Jealous of us, and think themselves obliged to suppress the improvements of a Distinct State and people, lest such improvements might one day prove fatal to themselves, and how much the Interest of *England* will prevail with our Sovereign against ours, Experience and Common sense easily show.

In short, Every body seems sensible that some remedy should be fallen upon, for our present Miserable state.

There are three Remedies propos'd.

1st The rectifying of our Constitution by fixed Dyets for our Parliament, with power to them to chuse our Ministers and Officers of State: By this Remedy 'tis propos'd to have our Ministry independent of the *English*, and so 'tis reasonable to expect they'll be at Liberty to mind and Contrive the Interest of their own Country; But I think this can signifie but little, unless we likewise take away the Negative in Parliament; Our Ministry Safe from *English* Influence may design good things; but while we Continue a Separat State from *England*, *English* Council will still interpose the Negative, and cross all the good Designs of our Ministry: but not this I conceive, will be able to do our business.

For 2^d 'tis Impracticable, being now that the *English* are in possession of our Sovereign's Negative; for the same reason that they have hitherto oppress'd us, they'll stop such a Rectification.

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2do Granting that this Remedy could be throughed, 'tis seems to me a very improper remedy, because it lays the foundation of a grudge betwixt the two Nations, which inevitably would break out in an open rupture, and could never End, but in the ruine in one of them, for suppose our Constitution rectified, our Trade upon a right footing, and our Nation in a flourishing Condition, is it possible it could continue so? Would *England* sit still, and see themselves outstript in some of the Chief branches of their trade, by a Nation that presently were to use this to their Ruin? no certainly, if Ever *England*, either by a false step of their Ministry, or a precept pluch, (which indeed I cannot foresee) should yield to a Rectifying of our Constitution, we must Expect, that if all other means to Reduce it, fail, they'll have Recourse to open force, and how unfit we are for a War with the *English* at this time, wee'l see in examining the second Remedy, which is a setting up a Distinct King.

The Setting up a distinct King, will not more Certainly than the first remedy, but I think more evidently provokes the Jealousy of *England*, and how unfit we are, to maintain a Separat King and State, and a War with *England*, may be made Evident upon many Reasons, that I'm unwilling to put in print.

I shall Remember my Countrey of our Confusions and Divisions. We are miserably Divided in *Episcopallians* and *Presbyterians*, in *Cavaleers* & *Revolution-foot-men*, these Divisions seem to make an Election very hard, and if by chance some party should prevail, the choice must fall upon the *St. German Pretender*, or some other; if upon the *St. German Pretender* he'll never rest here, if he's beat out here, we are undeniably undone; if he make good his pretensions to *England*, then we come to the same case we are in at present, and perhaps worse, for then all hopes of an *Union* must Evanish, and we made a tool, to oppress our Neighbours.

If we can suppose any other body so mad, as to accept our Crown, his Party at home will be very small, when he'll certainly be

oppos'd, both by the Cavalier and Revolution Party, and all Foreign Assistance is a *Chymera*, If they should use *France*, what security have we for our selves, when *England*, who is now the Barrier of the Liberties of *Europe*, is either brought low or destroyed: and while *France* continues so great, *Holland* must keep time with *England*.

And I think the person that insinuates something for the K. of *Prussia*, is not well skill'd in that Prince's Circumstances with his Neighbours, particularly with the *Swede*, who now is like to make an unwelcome visit to his Neighbourhood of *Saxony*: Nor will ever the King of *Prussia* be tempted so far to distract the Confederate Councils, to the endangering his native Estates; for any thing he can expect here.

I have endeavour'd to show the particular difficulties of these two Remedies: and to conclude the matter, I will ask one question of these Gentlemen, who so flatter themselves: Whether in this separate State, they would pretend we should still be inferior in strength to the *English*, or that we should exceed them? if we still be inferior, we can never make that Figure, and so never be in that Esteem with the rest of *Europe* that *England* is, nor can ever our Subjects pretend to these Advantages, or arrive at that height of Glory, that the *English* do, far less, to what the Subjects of the *Great British Empire* might pretend; and it cannot be denied, but that one day the Balance of *Europe*, may give *England* leisure to swallow us up. If it be pretended that we may exceed *England*, in this separate State, the Conclusion is very short, and no man after a serious thought, but will conclude, that of necessity, before the *English* suffer us to exceed them, they will venture a total Extirpation of us, or we of them.

My Opinion is, That there is no way to secure us of what we possess, or a Remedy to better us, but one, I mean, that *England* and we become one people, by which we become Masters of all the Riches, Plenty and Strength of *England*.

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The 3d Head I propos'd to consider, is what sort of Union seems best. There are two sorts propos'd, a *Federal*, and an *Incorporating* Union.

I never saw a formal Scheme of a Federal Union, nor do I think, a tolerable one can be devised. For while we are a distinct Sovereignty, there is still hazard of a Rupture, and when we see England jealous now in our low Condition, because of that hazard, how can we ever expect, (as is said above) that ever England will yield to the bettering our Condition? and the *English* Council have already declar'd themselves so positively upon this head, that there is no ground left for any further Dispute.

And if upon the present Juncture, as some alledge, we may force it from England, we cannot long enjoy it, and the hazard and difficulties of Foreign assistance, are abundantly expos'd above.

Now I come to consider the Objections against, and the Answers for an *Incorporating* Union.

Obj. The Parliament cannot make an *Incorporating* Union, because the Parliament cannot alter *Fundamentals*: And to strengthen this, they instance the Opinion of our Lawyers, *Nisbet* & *Malles*,

I never have regard to any mans opinion, but as I find it reasonable, and I'm always jealous of Courtiers, as they were at that time, and 'tis certain the politick of the Court of that time, was to oppose an Union. I'm sure any man that would examine the Laws made during these two Gentlemens Ministry, will see very great Alterations, made in that which they call *Fundamentals*, and they going along with it. But to answer distinctly to the point: A People may be in as great hazard, (upon occasion) from their Constitution, as from any subsequent Laws, and therefore their Constitution ought to be alter'd, when occasion requires, which must be done by our Parliament; and to gather the whole Mob
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of the Nation together, to judge of the most intricate points of Government, and how to begin or end with such a Meeting, I cannot understand.

And *de facto* our King and Parliament have upon many occasions alter'd that which they call *Fundamentals*, instance, the change of the Succession from the nearest Agnate of age to an Infant of the straight Line. The assuming of Females into the Entail of the Crown. The assuming into the Body of the Parliament, & Discarding again of Church men, seem'd to me to put the matter beyond all Dispute.

There is a partial Objection made, I mean by a Party of the Nation, and that is, That Presbytery, a matter of Conscience, is in hazard by this Union: For my own part, this Objection should weigh little with me, for I could never yet find out, where either the *Jus Divinum* of Episcopacy, or Presbytery was founded in Scripture, nor do I believe, that ever any reasonable Man thought otherwise, who was not imposed on by Interest or Breeding: but this Presbyterian fear seems to me very groundless. Presbytery may be secur'd in Scotland with an irritancy, that in case the Parliament of Great-Britain, should touch Presbytery in Scotland, the Union should *de facto* be dissolved, and the same Security given for Episcopacy in England, Presbytery will be secur'd in Scotland, from all hazard from the Church of England, because the Church of England's Security will be upon the same footing: but if there should be found difficulty, to get such Articles agreed too, the Addition of the Scots Representative to the Parliament of England will be mostly Presbyterian, and make the Presbyterian party of the Parliament of Great-Britain much stronger in proportion to the Episcopal party, than it is now in the Parliament of England; I say that Consideration, and the tenderness the Parliament of Great-Britain must always shew to innovate any thing in Scotland, seems a good Security, as Presbytery has in a separate State.

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'Tis objected, The great Resort of our Nobility and Gentry to London, will follow upon this Union, which will draw our Riches thither: To which I answer, That is infinitely more than compensated by our free Trade, in these particulars, beside others, the taking off the Imposition upon Linnen-cloth, Cattel, Coal, &c.

And the Importation of English Wool to Scotland, will be an extraordinary Advantage to our Cloath Manufactures, for 'tis Decay of English Wool, occasion'd by the hazard of importing, is the best reason I know of, given for the decay of our Cloath Manufactures; No body needs apprehend from this, any hazard of the falling of the price of our Scots Wool, for just now we import as much English Wool as we have occasion for, but 'tis the hazard of importing ruins our Manufactures, and when we have English Wool cheaper, our Manufactures must improve, which certainly will make greater consump^t of our own Wool.

'Tis objected, What Guarantee have we? I answer, The best Security ever was thought on or desir'd in any Treaty, viz. The Interest of England: The Security and Interest of England will be so greatly advanced by an Union with Scotland, and that Interest and Security still advanced by a further Improvement of Scotland, That as I never heard any Reason, so I believe there never will be any found, but a naked fear, occasion'd by a National prejudice. And it is the same reason, makes me think a numerous Representative in the British Parliament, but a burden to this Nation, a few may represent matters, and there never will be occasion for a National Party.

So much in General to Dispose my Countrymen to what I think their Interest, I know there are objections prepar'd against the particular Articles of the Treaty, which as soon as I see published, I shall Discover my opinion about them. In the mean time I will say, that if any thing be found amiss or unequal, I'm perswaded

persuaded, the English will as readily help it, being the party that has most at the Stake, and must after an *Union*, ever esteem our wellfare their own Interest.

I do Love my Countrey as well as any Man, and though this may seem a needless Assertion, seeing I Discover not my Name, yet for my own pleasure, I do say I Love my Countrey as well as any Man, and I have as great veneration for the great Achievements of our Heroical Progenitors, and I think these who are Instrumental, in carrying on this *Union*, do as great service to this Nation as any of our Heroes, and no doubt their Memory will have an Equal Return from Posterity.

I am firmly perswaded, that if self-designs and prejudices were laid aside, this *Union* would appear, the happiest prospect ever this Island had.



FINIS

